

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA                    )  
  )  
                  v.                                ) CRIMINAL NO. 04-10375-RWZ  
  )  
MICHAEL PRIDGEN                            )

GOVERNMENT'S OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANT'S MOTION IN LIMINE  
TO PROHIBIT REFERENCE TO "FELON"

The government respectfully opposes the defendant's motion to prohibit the government from using the words "felon" or "felony" at trial. Although the defendant notes that the statute speaks in terms of a crime punishable by imprisonment exceeding one year, the common definition of "felony" is precisely that: an offense punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year. See, e.g., U.S.S.G. § 2L1.2, comment. n.2. Moreover, the phrase as specifically used in a §922(g)(1) prosecution is a term of art that does not include certain crimes at all that otherwise are felonies, such as antitrust violations, and also does not include offenses that are punishable by up to two years but that are viewed as misdemeanors under state law. See 18 U.S.C. §921(a)(20). By contrast, the offenses that do satisfy the definition all readily meet the ordinary definition of "felony" under federal law.

Moreover, courts discussing offenses under 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1), including the First Circuit, routinely use the terms "felon" and "felony." See, e.g., United States v. Chevere, 368 F.3d 120 (2d Cir. 2004); United States v. Darrington, 351 F.3d

632 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2003); United States v. Snyder, 235 F.3d 42 (1<sup>st</sup> Cir. 2000).

Finally, the government does not believe use of the term "felon" or "felony" has the prejudicial effect the defendant perceives. Rather, the terms are simply short-hand - and accurate - words to use in the place of the otherwise unnecessarily wieldy phrase "crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year."

Accordingly, the defendant's motion should be denied.

Respectfully submitted,

MICHAEL J. SULLIVAN  
United States Attorney

By: /S/Donald L. Cabell  
DONALD L. CABELL  
LISA ASIAF  
Assistant U.S. Attorneys